

# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

FEBRUARY, 1942

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# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

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## LETTERS

### Red Cross Offer

A. & J.:

An orchid to Herbert Johnson, of Grand Island, Nebraska, for his paragraph, "Patriotic Question," in the January A. & J.

He says many men and women with writing ability are so handicapped that enlistment is impossible. He puts the question, "How can they use their skill as writers to help win the war?"

Thanks, pal, for striking a dormant, but responsive chord. I am, truly, one of those aforementioned subjects. For nine years I've been behind bars. I have three more before my debt to society is paid. Like all cons, I've got my beefs, but I hold no grudge against Uncle Sam. Instead, I've been working my brain for a way to help.

### WHAT PULP WRITERS EARN

Top annual income was \$15,000, lowest, \$550, in the Economic Survey of pulp writers recently conducted by the Pulp Writers Section of the Authors' Guild. Ken Crossen, survey chairman, writes A. & J. that the average full time income (for an average 35½ hour week) was \$2900. He adds that the pulp writer reporting the \$15,000 income wrote 1,200,000 words—under 15 different names.

Of the several hundred pulp writers covered in the survey, 63 per cent are full-time, 37 per cent, part-time; 52 per cent live in cities of over 25 thousand population, 12 per cent in rural sections. About four in five pulp writers are married; 82 per cent own cars, 45 per cent own homes; 50 per cent have no college degree.

The survey has developed much other important data. "We are planning to use our facts," writes Mr. Crossen, "to establish a basis for dealing with publishers in regard to rates. We shall compare our figures with the income of other professional and white-collar groups. We are establishing a foundation for cooperative effort with publishers to rebuild the pulp markets."

All pulp writers should belong to the Pulp Writers Section. Cost is nominal. Write Oscar Schisgall, chairman, 6 East 39th St., New York, N. Y.

Last July my 17-year-old son sent to me for signature papers admitting him to the navy. I'm proud now. And worried. My kid fighting while I'm chained!

But I've thought of something I can do. I address myself now to the fact detective books, for several of which I have written.

For any of these who will invite submission, I'll do a crime editorial on any subject, any theme, on the basis that full payment is to be made direct to the American Red Cross in my name. There are over 20 such books.

In addition, and on the same terms, I'll be glad to serve any other book on the market, from religion to the Post, if the editors will give me an assignment I can handle from behind stone walls.

I can write. Editorial lathstrings aren't always out to guys like me, but I made 14 sales in 1941, at rates from ½¢ to 5¢.

Dave Cooke of *Flying Aces*; Harry Keller of *Official Detective*; George Scullin of *Crime Confessions*; Leo Margulies of *Standard*; W. A. Swanburg of *Inside Detective*; M. Glen Kirkpatrick of *Farm Journal*, and several others—all know me. They've paid good rates for my stuff. That's as far as my agent will let me identify myself in this missive. A. & J. will forward any editorial bids.

W. F. K.

► A. & J. editors, who believe W. F. K. is sincere, will be glad to act as intermediaries. The first Red Cross check has already been dispatched—our payment to W. F. K. for the above letter.

### Those Toronto Rates

A. & J.:

In view of the fact you have given space to a flock of pulp magazines published at Toronto, I am reporting unfavorable conditions prevailing there.

Apparently, there are some fly-by-night publications. After spending about \$2 on postage, and waiting about six months, I received \$5 for two stories of about 1000 words each. To another outfit, in response to a favorable reply to a query, I sent a story of about 1800 words. A letter came with the information that if I would pad the story to 3500 words, I would get "between \$5 and \$7." I asked for the story back.

Another editor notified me he would pay \$5 for a 3500-word story.

Montreal, P. Q. WILLIAM MONROE.

► Is this the general experience? A. & J. would like reports from any writers obtaining good rates from Canadian pulps.

□ □ □ □

### ANNUAL FORECAST NUMBER

As we go to press with this issue, David Raffelock, associate editor, is on his way to New York, where he will cover the market situation for the ANNUAL FORECAST NUMBER (March). Watch for Mr. Raffelock's findings—and for other authoritative comment and prophecy in many fields of writing.

□ □ □ □

General chairman of the Second Annual Nationwide Contest of the Poetry Society of Colorado, details of which were published in our October issue, is Mrs. Ida K. Tilton, 650 Downing St., Denver, to whom all correspondence concerning the contest should be addressed.

The *New York Times*, New York, will merge its rotogravure section with its Sunday magazine, effective with the Feb. 15 issue. Increased emphasis in the expanded Sunday magazine will be placed on feminine fashions, food, home decoration and child care. Many more pictures will be used. Lester Markel, Sunday editor, will be assisted by Victor Talley, rotogravure editor.

*Hardware Today*, 612 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, which, prior to 1942, was a "new products" paper composed principally of listings and descriptions of new products, new services, new displays, and new dealer helps for the hardware trade, is being expanded to serve as the hardware trade's newspaper. Correspondents are needed to supply news stories, feature stories and human interest stories. Rate is 1 cent a word, but a bonus of ½ cent to 1 cent will be paid for material that has special interest. Anita Engelsman is editor.



# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

February, 1942

## THE BUILD-UP BUSINESS

... By ERNIE PHILLIPS

The author has written hundreds of stories for the pulps. He contributed "Sight, Sound and Smell," to our September, 1941, issue.

IT was a Western bang-bang that came back in the morning's mail. It was, I thought, a slightly better than average bang-bang; better than some which had fetched back checks instead of rejections. But Ronald Oliphant, then riding the big saddle at *Wild West Weekly*, didn't agree with me. Typed Mr. Oliphant:

"The basic idea for a story is here, but I'm afraid it isn't convincing enough to get across. The build-up for the climax doesn't put the story over."

Ah, the build-up!

I went through the story in minute detail, keeping the rejection cause in mind. The editor was right. I had sadly neglected the build-up. I had failed utterly to make the thing ring true and become sufficiently convincing to put it over the editorial ridge.

Let me explain:

It was a 4500 worder. It concerned a nester's brat of a kid who moved into the cow country and who naturally was the butt of all jokes and ridicule of gnarled old ranchmen. The hatred of cowmen toward the nester was strong enough; but in this yarn, striving for a different Western slant, I wanted my hero to save the life of the villain after the "heavy" was caught in the midst of a milling stampede when his mount went down. I had never seen a story wherein the hero kneed his own horse to the very edge of a stampede then leaped boldly from back to back of angered steers until he reached the apparently doomed man. I thought it might make an acceptable story.

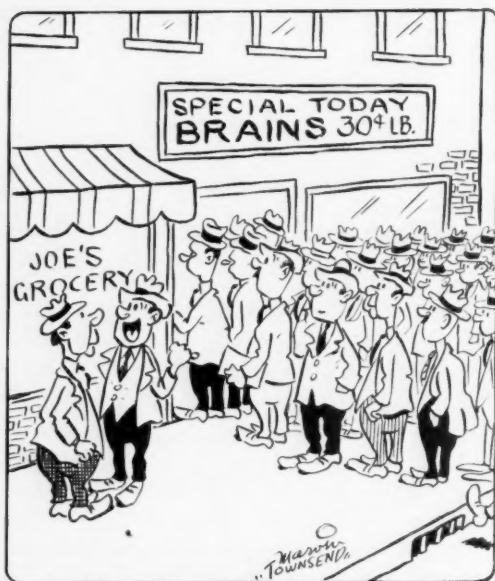
But it flopped because of lack of proper build-up to make it ring true. An impossible

situation? Sure! But what writer doesn't use the impossible and make it sound plausible simply by the build-up? So in this yarn I had a complete re-write.

It wasn't so tough. I revised the opening and introduced the nester's kid as an arrival from the Northwest logging country. I showed where he'd captured log-rolling contests and how he was able to balance himself on spinning, whirling chunks of timber with considerable ease, neatness and dispatch. No, I didn't simply relate he could do these things. I showed him doing them. On the trail, high waters were encountered; the ram-rod's hound gave chase to a rabbit that plunged into the swirling river. The hound was trapped in dizzy currents, struggling desperately to swim ashore against a relentless current that sucked his strength away. That was where I had the kid show what he could do atop a spinning log. I had him take his rope, shove a chunk of drift-wood out from shore, top it and guide it straight to the doomed pooch by treading his feet like the lumberjack decking a huge log. It was just that easy to plant the scene which later would leave the reader convinced that the nester's kid possessed a sense of balance, a superlative judge of distance and the cool, calm nerve which would permit him to leap swiftly from the back of steer to steer until he reached the doomed villain.

Back to *Wild West Weekly* rode the yarn. The next time I saw it, it was in print.

Away back in 1919, I had a baseball yarn headed for *Top-Notch*. It concerned a veteran pitcher who, his right arm swiftly going back



"Pretty smart of Joe to have this sale while the writers' convention is in town!"

on him, found himself in a crucial game which would determine the pennant. Victory meant his club would slide in for a juicy slice of World's Series money. He wanted that Series check—needed it to give him a start in some other vocation for he knew this would be his last major league assignment. To enable him to achieve his goal, I had him facing a deadly left-handed slugger in the crucial moments. I had him quit pitching right-handed, as he had done for 15 years, and pitch with his left arm to the dreaded batsman.

Just a semi-pro then with a hungry sale or two under my belt, I figured the yarn would cut the mustard. But Henry Wilton Thomas refused to snap the bait. Wrote he:

"An idea that might get across, if handled right; as it now stands, it is inconceivable that a veteran right-handed hurler would have control, speed, confidence and the ability to take such a daring chance. See if you can plant scenes throughout the story which will bring this point out in the end and make it convincing. We don't like to offer our readers a lump of sugar then shove a capsule of quinine down their throats in the last paragraph."

Dear Henry Wilton Thomas! If only more kindly, patient editors of his calibre could give such priceless aid to the ambitious scribblers just starting out! I caught his drift and went through the yarn from beginning to end. I had played professional baseball for 10 years myself; I knew my diamond and the men who

follow it for a living. I had been a pitcher; and I had known, up in the old Union Association, a right-handed pitcher who liked to fool around tossing the ball with his left hand. That was all I needed. I took my hero and had him clowning every time he pitched to hitters in batting practice or whenever he warmed up to start a game. I showed him always throwing the last two or three deliveries with his left arm. I had his team-mates and rival players commenting on the accurate control and the gradually increasing speed he showed as the season wore along. Then I poured a little more build-up business into the thing by having him start to throw southpaw curves. The final "plant" was where, a game handily won by a top-heavy score, the hero laughingly flung aside his left-handed fielder's glove, borrowed a southpaw's glove and playfully pitched the last two innings with his left arm.

Back to Mr. Thomas went the revised story. He mailed me a note of acceptance. Ten days later the check arrived.

Back in 1937 I had a wrestling yarn. It carried the Western flavor; I wanted my hero to become the first legitimate cowboy ever to capture the head-spinning championship of the world. I had the Champ pitch training camp out in the cow country. A call for beefy, hefty men to work-out with the Champ was sounded. This brought my hero into the thing. He was crude, unpolished, utterly lacking in grappling ability. But he had power, stamina, courage, an indestructible grit and oodles of strength. So when one of those monotonous "elimination" tournaments was pulled to find a challenger for the Champ, I had the kid slip out of the country of the steers and enter. Papers reaching the cow town put him into the ring with the Champ. Naturally, the kid won.

I sent it to Nat Fleischer of *All-American Sport*. Nat had taken 21 stories in a row without a sign of a rejection. But this one stubbed its toe. Nat wasn't to be roped in on a sucker play. "I don't think my readers would fall for a green, inexperienced kid gaining the title so swiftly. Perhaps with some logical build-up you could iron out this defect." So said Nat.

Nat was right. I had loafed on the job. I had overlooked the importance of the build-up. So a re-write from top to bottom was on schedule. I had the kid, after getting the works in brutal style from the Champ, remember all the holds the Champ had used so ruthlessly on him. That night, and every night

thereafter for long weeks, I showed my hero, green, clumsy, awkward and untutored, slipping out to the corral and practicing those holds on long yearling steers. I had him graduate from the younger beef and tug and grunt with mammoth long-horned steers. I showed the development of a super-human arm strength. I showed how fleetness of foot was necessary to avoid slashing horns and charging, enraged steers. I showed the gradual increase in the kid's efficiency and demonstrated the powerful strength of finger and leg and body that was needed in order to so handle such hefty beasts. In each bout with the steers, the kid polished up the use of every new hold the Champ slammed on the hero as he showed him up in daily work-outs before ranchmen and cow-hands.

In brief, the plants tended to prepare the reader for the final match wherein all those long, sweaty hours of work under the stars and moon with the cattle enabled the kid to take everything the Champ could dish out until he was physically worn, and the hero's turn had arrived.

Nat Fleischer gave it the okay when next he saw it.

No matter how many stories a person may produce and have published, the old build-up business is liable to be overlooked now and then. Trained, skilled pulp men frequently neglect it. Men, and women, too, who've been tormenting typewriters and grinding out reams of fiction for years now and then let the build-up or planting of essential scenes pass by the boards. The stories come trickling back. "Not convincing enough," is the general reason for rejection.

Let beginners receiving such notes go through their yarns and look for the lack of build-up and for the missing "plants" which should earlier have been distributed here and there. And let them not be afraid of the impossible. A good chunk of build-up business can make any possible situation sound convincing, logical, and true. I know! In more than 20 years of scribbling, I've got across a long string of impossible stories simply because they received, either in the original or in the revision, a well-nourished gob of the old build-up business.

## SELL ODDITY PHOTOS!

By IRWIN KOSTIN, Connecticut

WHAT are the easiest of all photos to sell? That's easy! Oddity photos—the "Believe It Or Not" sort of thing.

About three miles from my home is the oddest home I have ever seen. It has a huge tree growing right through it. The owner, a nature lover, wanted to build—and he wanted to save the big elm, too. I photographed the tree from several angles and sent the prints out. Look at this list of sales:

Everywoman's .....	\$ 5.00
Central Press .....	3.00
Grit .....	2.00
Phil. Inquirer .....	7.25*
Boston Globe .....	12.00*
New Haven Register .....	6.50*
Worcester Telegram .....	5.50*
Hartford Courant .....	3.00
Esso Road News .....	5.00
Springfield Union .....	9.75*
Yankee .....	4.00
American Forests .....	15.00*
Mechanix Illustrated .....	5.00
Friends Magazine .....	5.00
New Bedford Standard-Times .....	2.50
New York Sunday News .....	5.00
Toronto Star .....	5.00
People and Places .....	5.00
Connecticut Circle .....	3.00
Detroit News .....	5.00
Atlanta Constitution .....	5.00
Providence Journal .....	3.50
Progressive Grocer .....	12.50*
	<b>\$134.50</b>

The payments marked with an asterisk covered text as well as photo. With other sales probable or certain, including syndicates, this single oddity will bring me over \$200.

One of the pages in my record book is headed, "Hess Estate." That may sound to you like a million-

aire's countryside home. Actually, it is a triangular piece of sidewalk, 22 inches on a side, located in front of a cigar store in the Greenwich Village section of New York City. It is reputedly the smallest piece of real estate in the world.

The inscription on the sidewalk reads, "The Hess Estate, Never Dedicated For Public Purposes."

My single photograph of this oddity has brought in over \$60.

Where does one learn of oddities waiting to be photographed? Almost anywhere. Friends often tip me off. I have found newspapers to be the most consistent source of leads. Recently I subscribed to a clipping service which, for a reasonable amount, sends me oddity clippings each week. These, by my stipulation, cover items within practical travelling distance of my home.

The oddity lead may be in an article mainly about something else. Our local daily recently had a story on a college professor voted the most popular by the students. I learned from this that the professor's hobby was collecting resonant rocks that, when tapped, gave off a musical sound. The professor had constructed a xylophone of rocks.

My photos and stories of the professor and his xylophone, on which he plays both popular and classical music, have appeared in *Popular Mechanics*, *Grit*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and *Everywoman's*.

I have just finished some prints of a huge clock tower built with a pen knife, by a hometown man, valued at \$10,000. Will my photo sell? Of course!

Oddities are not so numerous that the photo market is flooded with offerings. But they are sufficiently common to yield a consistent income for the enterprising free-lance, no matter where he lives.

# DOING THE RADIO INTERVIEW

... By CHARLES CARSON

Popular program feature, used by every radio station, is the informal interview. Charles Carson, California writer and instructor in writing, offers a case-study discussion of technique.

WHEN I was assigned to interview Louella Woodford on Station KFAC in Los Angeles, there immediately occurred to me the three steps necessary to make such an undertaking successful. First, I would have to find a premise, a single idea important enough to justify the broadcast. Second, the script would be written. Third, the interview would be put on the air.

The first part was simple. Miss Woodford wrote her first novel when she was thirteen; moreover, she was the youngest person ever to become a member of the Authors' League of America. In the minds of the listening public, those facts immediately placed her in a category apart from other writers, giving her "fan" value. However, as that first book was written nine years ago, it is hardly news today, which means that the idea must be brought up-to-date. It happens that Louella's current novel will be released to book dealers in February, and that makes a perfect tie-up with the radio interview, because the authoress is again news.

The interview idea being established, I began to plan the script. It is customary always to toss your subject a few compliments, whenever possible, as it compensates him for his cooperation and makes the broadcast seem important to listeners. But care must be taken that you don't wax commercial and that the interview doesn't degenerate into a mutual backslapping affair.

Several qualities regarding the subject should be carefully considered, for in preparing the script you are doing more than merely write clever lines on paper; you're creating a medium by which the person interviewed is to project himself to the audience. Of course, he is given the best lines, and the interviewer serves as a sort of stooge, "feeding" the lines to the fellow across the table, who really is the star of the show.

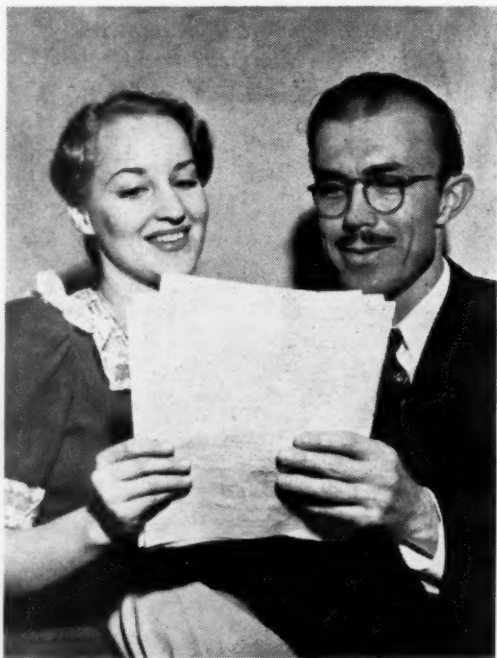
If the subject is without dramatic experience, you may encounter a problem, as he will probably "bog down" in lines that are long or complicated. In such a case, his lines should

be sharp, brief, straight-to-the-point and easy to read. That is, he must say a lot and say it well in a few words.

Louella Woodford, however, has had experience on the stage and screen, and knows how to read lines well. I had no apprehensions about her getting through the part. My only problem was to see that the stuff was there—she would do the rest.

When the script was ready and the moment arrived for us to go on the air, I discovered that Louella, despite her theatrical experiences, was as scared as a kitten in cold water. While waiting in the ante-room outside the control booth, we went over the script together, and then I chatted about my new poinsettia garden and my son's model airplane, in an effort to calm her nerves.

When she began speaking, her voice was slightly shaky, but in a few seconds she forgot her self-consciousness and came through in great form. I opened casually with:



**THE SCRIPT IS REHEARSED**  
Louella Woodford and Charles Carson prepare for their broadcast.



Q. How long have you been writing, Miss Woodford?

A. Since I was thirteen. At that age, I wrote my first novel, *Two Against Fate*.

You get the idea, I established the premise of the interview at once. Then, when we were under way, I seemed to ramble a bit with small talk to amuse the listener, such as:

Q. What do you consider your most outstanding work?

A. Bublitzschika.

Q. Bublit— is that the title of one of your books?

A. No, that's the title of my youngest cocker spaniel.

Q. The youngest? Have you a whole family of cocker spaniels?

A. Well, the family includes four parakeets too, besides another cocker spaniel named Chrissie, my horse and my father.

Q. What a family! And what names!

A. My father has a better name. His name is Jack.

Q. Jack?

A. Yes, he provides the jack for the horse, the parakeets and the cocker spaniel, so that they won't suffer from priorities.

Miss Woodford's background, former laurels and home life were presented, much in the order of a short-story's flashback. Then we got down to cases and talked about her real

achievements, finally arriving at her present interests.

Q. Your novel that's coming out in February— what's it about?

A. About four hundred pages.

Q. I mean, what's the plot about?

A. About a girl and a boy. It's called *Strange Daughter*.

Q. I thought all daughters were strange. What's different about this one?

A. Well, you see, she was eccentric, sort of—and so nobody liked her. But in the end it turned out that her eccentricity was due to genius, and that explained everything.

Miss Woodford's interview ended with the disclosure that on the day before she had signed a contract for two new novels. This rounded out the talk and left listeners looking forward to coming achievements.

The whole interview was planned carefully, but when it came over the air it sounded like a friendly, informal talk, with no part of it planned or "bookish." Your radio listener doesn't want you to *read* to him; he wants you to *talk* to him. He resents your "reading lines," but he will welcome you into his home if you sit before him and engage in a neighborly chat about things he likes. If you remember this point, the matter of technique will never be a great problem.

## UNINTENTIONAL LIBEL IN FICTION

... By ROGER SHERMAN HOAR

WE are all familiar with the protection-line employed by movie producers on quasi-historical films:

"Any resemblance to any person living or dead is purely coincidental."

In fact, that line is so well-known as to be a matter of common jest, which fact deprives it of much of its legal standing. Audiences are frankly skeptical of it. And I have been unable to find any recorded instance of it proving either effective or ineffective in Court.

To win a libel suit based on matter not clearly defamatory and damaging, and not clearly referring to the plaintiff, the plaintiff has to establish "innuendo," "inducement," and "colloquium." These are technical legal words of law of libel and slander, in which connection they have very little relation to their popular meaning.

Mr. Hoar is former Assistant Attorney General of Massachusetts, the author of several standard law texts, and under the pen-name, "Ralph Milne Farley," is the author of considerable fiction.

The "innuendo" is the hidden defamatory meaning of apparently innocent words. The "inducement" is the damaging effect of words which apparently could not cause damage. And the "colloquium" is the identification of the plaintiff as being the person referred to.

In this present article, we are concerned with the colloquium. The principle of law, under which an author's perfectly innocent use of a name chosen at random may constitute a libel on a total stranger who happens to have that same name is thus stated in a leading law cyclopedia:

Since in actions for defamation defendant's intent is ordinarily immaterial, it is generally held that, if the public may understand that the words used refer to plaintiff, it is immaterial that defendant had no intention to refer to plaintiff.

An author has to give names to his characters, except in rare instances such as H. G.



"If you dont believe my pop's a writer, come over to my house an' I'll show you some of his rejection slips."

Wells's "The Time Machine." How, then, can he protect himself against accidentally committing libel?

The use of the motion picture line would look silly, no editor would stand for it, and it probably would be ineffectual.

Two other outs suggest themselves: either (1) invent such a peculiar name that no real person could possibly have it; or (2) use such a common name that no single individual, out of the myriads who possess it, could possibly be meant. Yet both of these expedients have gotten authors into trouble.

Mark Twain gave the name of "Colonel Eschol Sellers" to a quaint character in his "The American Claimant," on the assumption that no one would have such a preposterous first name as "Eschol." But up bobbed a real Colonel Eschol Sellers, who possessed a number of characteristics similar to the story-character, in addition to the name. In the face of a threatened libel suit, Mark Twain apologized and changed the name to Colonel Beriah Sellers; whereupon up bobbed a man of *that* name with threat of suit. The author again apologized, and changed the name to Colonel Mulberry Sellers, which name was not claimed by any real person, at least up to the 1891 edition of Clemens's works. An account of this episode appears in that edition.

But it isn't much more safe to pick a very common name. Back in 1923, David Belasco produced a play entitled "Call the Doctor" by Jean Archibald. The action called for a bit of back-fence gossip by one of the feminine characters. Wishing to be perfectly sure to slander no one, the author picked as the name of the victim of the gossip, a Hungarian name as common and indefinite there as John Smith would be here. The gossip was as follows:

"Pogany Willie is not true to me. Money I give him all the time, and he blow it on American girls."

Now it happens that Willy Pogany is the name of a prominent American painter. When his wife heard the play, she was horrified to learn apparently not only that her husband was faithless, but even that this faithlessness was such a matter of common knowledge as to have become a stage jest. So she picked up and left him.

Mr. Pogany promptly sued Mr. Belasco, and the actress who spoke the lines, for \$200,000 damages.

At the trial, the author made his explanation of the choice of the lines stick, but it was a narrow squeak, and the defense cost the producer a pretty penny.

If Mr. Archibald had used an American name, such as "Jones," or had used "Willie" without any "Pogany," he would probably have been okeh. So I'd say: the commoner the name, the safer you are. However, don't use names so common as to be insipid, or your story won't sell.

My own practice is to use the names of friends and acquaintances, generally with their permission. It is surprising how pleased the average man or woman is to be put into a story, even as a villain.

And then, if some total stranger claims to have been libeled, the proof that you have a friend of the same name, ought effectively to shut him up.

□ □ □ □

## AND WELCOME

By CLIFF WALTERS

Requiring steel  
To lay the keel  
Of sub and battleship,  
May Uncle Sam  
Take every damn'  
MS. destroying clip.

# THE WRITER IN WARTIME

. . . By DAVID RAFFELock

Mr. Raffelock is Director of the Simplified Training Course and Associate Editor of *The Author & Journalist*.

WAR creates a new set of values, makes the most determined demands ever placed upon human beings. Our former way of life has ended; it will never return. When the democracies are victorious and this turbulent planet forgets the nightmare of international gangsterism, a better world will be constructed.

Writers must not only help bend all effort toward successful warfare, but must in addition fulfill two other purposes: maintenance of morale and preservation of the ideals essential to life worth living.

Countless new markets will open. Drastic, difficult times are ahead. Writers will be called upon to help educate the public to save materials, to use substitutes, to make useful articles, to adapt their way of life to the ubiquitous demands of all-out war. Keep alert for changes, developments and new ideas. Trade journals, general magazines, almost every type of publication, will want articles of this nature. Listen for government orders or statements, watch your newspapers, listen keenly to talks on the radio. Then be among the first to query magazines. There will be countless opportunities to do special research, to get interviews, to write up some local or sectional plan tried out successfully.

Writers will be needed to maintain morale. Articles may be written and sold even by those who are not authorities if they contain a new element of hope or courage. But it is fiction that most of all will be counted on to keep people cheerful and mentally sane. Dreary, tragic stories will never be able to compete successfully with newspaper accounts of battles or with the lists of dead and missing.

Stories that will be in demand are those that make people laugh, that arouse kindly, hopeful emotions, that titilate the desires, that soothe with sex. The old, easy escape variety of fiction may prove too obvious to satisfy the more sophisticated public we have today. A more brittle realism coupled with as much emotional release as possible, is probably the type of story that will be most in demand. It is the prescription ordered by the doctor as an antidote to too much horror of war, uncertainty and dread of the news of the day to come.

Don't overlook the war entirely in your stories. War will strongly predominate; it will flood into almost every printed script. But often it will be only in the background: reference to the news of war, a character who is in the military service, civilian war work. Remember that love and passion and hope continue even in blackouts and bomb shelters and war-ridden lands. And while bombs make shambles and black-bordered lists grow longer people laugh and plan and look ahead.

Your stories should be sane, calm, hopeful. These are responses from the civilian population so vital to good morale. They are the sugar-coated pill to be subtly inserted in the orange juice of realism.

Stories and poems and essays should be written that keep alive the principles of decency and constructiveness. It must be realized that when war in this country deepens, hatreds, suspicions and phobias will arise. As we tighten our belts and wanly scan the horizon for some faint flicker of peace, we are prone to intensify our hate of those who have caused us misery—or those who we may be led to believe have done so.

Civilized human beings do not need injections of hatred to fight courageously and valiantly. We will fight better and bring about a more equitable and working peace if we do not forget the ineluctable relationship between all men, if we fight not for destruction but for the construction of a better world.

More than ever balance, temperance and a steadying influence will be needed. The written word is powerful. Keep it strong and honest and bright in the frantic days to come.

There will be a market for what you write if you not only watch the trend but remember as well the fundamental principles on which a good society is based. You will preserve your fine calling of authorship and justify the labors of you and your fellow writers not only today but in the brightness of the future which we are now fully and wholly committed to bring about.

# CONDENSE, POINT UP —AND SELL!

... By V. OSTERGAARD

Got some unsold manuscripts on hand?  
Try this system of a Minnesota writer.  
It is thoroughly sound.

WITH paper prices up, with shipping facilities at a premium, with less leisure time in prospect for numerous readers of magazines, editors are seeking fiction and information in smaller packages.

Writers can profit from this fact. Many will not need to write new stories in order to profit quickly. Often their files will yield material which, after concentration, may qualify for editorial preference.

My method of condensing rejects grew from experience. I started writing for the trade journals, broke into the older-age brackets of the juvenile field and presently began pounding at the slicks. One day my bank account was minus zero; there wasn't a marketable yarn in the file; worse, I was totally unable to coax or force a new plot into existence.

A week's vacation helped. After the rest, I was able to examine critically some of the unsold stuff in storage. Picking a 6000-worder which I had hoped would fetch at least \$500, I condensed it to 1675 words, mailed it and in two weeks received a \$25 check.

It was welcome. But perhaps experience was the greater profit. Subsequently, I dug other rejects out of hiding, hacked out a lot of words, pointed them up, and sold them.

I had aimed "Black Jack," for instance, at the slicks. The story, about a homeless dog suspected of killing sheep, carried a new twist. The plot seemed sound, the writing not too terrible. Though several editors had written kindly letters instead of sending rejection slips, none had been quite enthusiastic enough. Now, with an avaricious gleam in my eye, I slashed 2000 words from the original 6000, wrapped up the bleeding carcass and shipped it. The editor of *Cargo* rewarded the sacrifice with \$25. Later, reading the printed story, I discovered that Rowena Ferguson neatly had excised more surplus weight. The story was down to approximately 3500—a better story, too.

My brother and I collaborated on an article

we titled "Silver." A fawn had been tamed in the Montana forest. Freed, the yearling deer remained tame, picked the ranger cabin, where my brother was stationed, for its part-time home. The story was good. Many editors said so. Twenty-five failed to buy. On the twenty-sixth submission, the wordage cut from 4000 to 2440, *Boys' Life* (Cook) paid us \$24.40.

Other stories and articles, apparently doomed to languish in a steel drawer, received drastic surgery. With few exceptions, the results brought checks.

Any writer who can turn out a salable story can also apply the reduction process. There's no magic in my method. It consists chiefly of work—to suggest anything else would be dishonest. However, a step-by-step outline may serve as (1) a brief analysis of the job involved, (2) a time-saving guide, and (3) a stimulant.

Here are the elements of my reduction-formula:

1. Read your story or article carefully.
2. List the CHIEF characters on paper.
3. Summarize plot or outline in 200 words or less. On paper.
  - (a) Improve outline or plot, if possible.
  - (b) Fix an approximate, and tentative, word-limit for the revised story.
4. With the thumbnail plot for a guide, strike out, in the manuscript, such pages and paragraphs not absolutely necessary to a reader's enjoyment of the narrative. Be ruthless!
5. In the remaining portions of the text, strike out the sentences and words not absolutely necessary to the reader's enjoyment of the narrative. You gotta be ruthless!
6. Try to rewrite the introduction so as to make the plot-problem or story-purpose emerge clearly in the
  - (a) First 300 words, or better still
  - (b) first 200 words, or better yet
  - (c) first 100 words, or best of all
  - (d) first sentence.
7. Gather up the mangled remains and retype.

You may wish to polish the result—or you may still see where you can use the ruthless knife once more.



## LANGUAGE THE ARMY TALKS

By LT. JOHN E. NIXON and JOYCE NEWBILL MARTIN

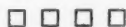
HEP! Two! Three! Four! Writers—HALT.

If you're planning to write an army yarn or two, here's a glossary of army terms you'll find helpful.

- A.W.O.L.* or *A.W.O.* *Loose*—absent without official leave.
- Ack-Ack Boys*—anti-aircraft troops.
- Aide*, or *Aide-de-Camp*—a personal assistant to a general officer.
- Armored Cow*—canned milk. Also called *Canned Cow*.
- B.O.Q.*—bachelor officers' quarters.
- Bantam*—(See *Jeep*).
- Battery X*—(See *Guard House*).
- Black-strap*—coffee.
- Blind*, a—carelessly damaged equipment being paid for out of a soldier's monthly pay-check.
- Blitz*—abbreviation of German word *blitzkrieg*; an attack without warning, of lightning swiftness.
- Blitz-buggy*—(See *Jeep*).
- Block Party*—a cooperative neighborhood party given for soldiers and other service men on leave, with all the homes in an area usually comprising several blocks acting jointly as host.
- Blood*—catchup.
- Bob-tail*—a dishonorable discharge. Also called a *Kick*.
- Bow-legs*—cavalryman. Also called *Yellow-leg*.
- Brass Hats*—General Staff members.
- Brig*—(See *Guard House*).
- Bubble Dancing*—washing dishes.
- Buck Private*—an army recruit or private with no rating. Also called *Yardbird*.
- Bucking*—extra efforts to gain recognition.
- Bucking for Orderly*—extra efforts for personal appearance when competing for post of orderly to the commanding officer.
- Bunk Fatigue*—sleep.
- Buscar*—borrowed money.
- Bust*—to reduce a non-commissioned officer to the grade of private.
- Butcher*—army doctor.
- Buzzard*—chicken or turkey.
- CO*—commanding officer. Also called *Skipper*; *KO*.
- Can I See You?*—term used by creditors when trying to collect money owed.
- Canned Cow*—canned milk. Also called *Armored Cow*.
- Canned Horse* or *Canned Willie*—corned beef.
- Canteen*—a Post Exchange or general store. Also called *P.X.*
- Canteen Checks*—coupon books bought by soldiers for use in army canteens or Post Exchanges and post motion picture theatres. Also called *P.X. Checks*.
- Chili Bowl*—regulation haircut.
- Chits*—slips signed by officers as they eat meals at the Officers' Mess. A record of meals eaten, so the monthly bill may be computed.
- Chow*—food; any meal in general.
- Chow Hound*—person taking more than his share of food.
- Cits* or *Civies*—civilian clothes. Also called *Sack*.
- Clink*—(See *Guard House*).
- Cold Feet*—fear; lack of courage.
- Com.*—government commissary or general store.
- Corner Pocket*—(See *Guard House*).
- Cow Juice*—fresh milk.
- Date Leaves*—chaperoned parties given in private homes arranged through the *U.S.O.*, whereby "dates" are provided for soldiers and other service men on "leave."
- Day Room*—small room designated for leisure time use by organizations of company size. Furnished from company funds, it may have pool table, magazines, writing equipment, small games, etc.
- Dog Robber*—an officer's orderly. Also called *Striker*.
- Dogface*—term applied to Selectees.
- Dogmeat*—(See *Strictly Dogmeat*).
- Dogtags*—identification disks worn around arm or neck. The army requires the wearing of two regulation identification disks.
- Dough Puncher*—army baker.
- Doughboy* or *Dough*—an infantryman.
- Duck Board*—sidewalk.
- Dud*—an unexploded shell.
- Duff*—a sweet item of any sort.
- Electric Stooze*—intercommunications system from barracks to the company commander's office. Also called *Mechanical Rat*.
- Exchange Day*—army payday.
- Fatigue*—special duty involving physical labor for which blue denims are usually worn around army posts.
- Field*, in the—campaigning against an enemy under actual or assumed conditions.
- Fin*—five-dollar bill. Also called a *V*.
- Fisheyes*—tapioca pudding.
- Fogy*—a percentage increase in pay according to the length of time one has been in the service.
- Foot Locker*—a small trunk used to keep clothing and personal articles, issued to each soldier as the quantity lasts. So called because they are placed at the foot of the bed for inspection and general keeping. Size: 1' 6" x 2' 6" x 1'.
- Four by Four*—4-wheel vehicle with 4-wheel brake.
- Foxhole*—pit dug by a soldier to protect his body.
- Frogskin* or *Flag*—a dollar bill.
- G.H.Q.*—General Headquarters.
- G.I.*—government issue, usually in reference to clothing and equipment.
- G.I. Can*—ash can. *G.I.* in this case is said by some "old timers" to mean galvanized iron.
- G.I. Jig* or *G.I. Hop*—government sponsored dance.
- Gold Coast, The*—the section of an army post where the ranking officers live.
- Goldbrick*—person doing as little work as possible to get by; a shirker.
- Goldfish*—salmon.
- Goon Car*—army command car.
- Guard House*—place of military confinement. Also called *Corner Pocket*, *Battery K*, *Brig* and *Clink*.
- Guard House Lawyer*—a person who knows little but talks much about regulations, military law and soldiers' "rights."
- H.Q.*—headquarters.
- Hang a Sharp Sack*—to look well in your clothes.
- Hardack*—a very hard bread.
- Hash Mark*—a service stripe; one for each three-year enlistment.
- Hell-Cat*—bugler.
- Hike*—to march.
- Hitch*—an enlistment period.
- Holy Joe*—chaplain. Also called *Sky Pilot*.
- Housewife*—packet of needles, buttons and thread issued by the Quartermaster's Corps.
- "How!" or "Here's to My Papers!"—a salute or toast spoken before drinking.

**IC**—inspected and condemned.  
**Jarhead**—army mule. Also called *Missouri Nightingale*.  
**Jawbone**—credit. To buy without money. Likewise, to shoot a weapon over a qualification course when it does not count for record.  
**Jeep** or **Jeep Buggy**—midget army command and reconnaissance truck which can go anywhere. Also called *Bantam*, *Blitz-buggy* and occasionally *Peep*. In some parts of the country, Draftees have been nicknamed a "jeep."  
**KO**—commanding officer. Also called *CO*; *Skipper*.  
**KP**—kitchen police duty. Usually consists of washing dishes and cleaning. Often used as a means of punishment.  
**Kick**—a dishonorable discharge. Also called *Bob-tail*.  
**Lance Jack**—a temporary or acting corporal with the same duties and authority of a regularly appointed corporal, but without the pay of the grade.  
**MP**—military police.  
**Mechanical Rat**—(See *Electric Stooze*).  
**Mechanized Dandruff**—fleas.  
**Mess**—any meal in general.  
**Mess Gear**—a soldier's individual mess kit, consisting of knife, fork, spoon and cup.  
**Mess Hall**—dining hall.  
**Missouri Nightingale**—army mule. Also called *Jarhead*.  
**Mitt-flopper**—a soldier who makes a practice of doing favors for his superiors. An "apple polisher."  
**Molotov Cocktail**—a gasoline or incendiary tank grenade.  
**Mtr. Pool**—motor pool. An area where motor vehicles are congregated and dispatched officially for duties.  
**Mule Skinner**—teamster.  
**Noncom**—a non-commissioned officer.  
**O.D.**—officer of the day. Also olive drab, a familiar army color.  
**O.G.**—officer of the guard.  
**On the Carpet**—called before the commanding officer for disciplinary reasons.  
**Over the Hill**—to desert.  
**P.X.**—Post Exchange, or store. Also called *Canteen*.  
**P.X. Checks**—(See *Canteen Checks*).  
**Pace**—a step 30 inches long.  
**Peep**—(See *Jeep*).  
**Piece**—rifle or weapon.  
**Pocket Lettuce** or just *Lettuce*—loose dollar bills.  
**Police Up**—to clean up.  
**Punk**—bread.  
**Pup Tent**—shelter tent.  
**Prop Wash**—a term applied to stretching the facts or talking too much. E.g., if a flyer is too loquacious or tends to exaggerate, he is said to be uttering *prop wash*.  
**Q.M.**—the Quartermaster; an officer in charge of supplies.  
**Red Tape**—official process through army channels.  
**Reup**—to reenlist. Also called *Takeon*.  
**Roll up the Flaps**—a suggestion to stop talking.  
**Rookie**—a new recruit.  
**S.N.A.F.U.**—pronounced Snafu. "Situation normal, all fuddled up." Expression used by soldiers when mix-ups occur and things get out of control, and several countermanding orders are given.  
**S.O.P.**—Standard Operating Procedure.  
**Sack**—civilian clothes. Also called *Civs* or *Civies*.  
**Scandal Sheet**—the monthly payroll.  
**Section 8 Man**—one mentally deranged.  
**Selectee**—any person who has been formally inducted into the Armed Services by provision of the Selective Service Act of 1940, as passed by the 76th Congress of the United States.  
**Service Club**—a large building under the management of an army hostess which serves the various

leisure-time needs of soldiers, including dance floor, library, cafeteria and lounge with reading matter.  
**Shanghaied**—man transferred without asking for it.  
**Shave-tail**—a Second Lieutenant.  
**Shift Your Oar**—to remove your spoon from your cup.  
**Shoot**—a friendly command to go ahead and talk.  
**Sick, Lame and Lazy**—sick call.  
**Side Arms**—condiments at the table.  
**Skipper**—a commanding officer, or the company commander. Also called *CO*; *KO*.  
**Skirt Patrol**—looking for a date.  
**Sky Pilot**—chaplain. Also called *Holy Joe*.  
**Sleds**—government issue shoes.  
**Slum**—a beef and vegetable stew.  
**Slum Burner**—army cook.  
**Sniper**—an expert rifle shot detailed to pick off enemy leaders or individuals who expose themselves.  
**Sow-belly**—bacon.  
**Stars and Stripes**—beans.  
**Stovepipe**—mortar.  
**Strictly Dogmeat**—anything meeting with disapproval.  
**Striker**—a soldier who works for an officer; an orderly. Also called *Dog Robber*.  
**Sugar Report**—a letter from your girl.  
**Swill**—beer.  
**Takeon**—to reenlist. Also called *Reup*.  
**Taps**—lights out; silence.  
**Tattoo**—bed check; warning for *Taps*.  
**The Old Man**—the commanding officer; company commander.  
**Top Sergeant** or **Top Kick**—the First Sergeant.  
**U.S.O.**—United Service Organizations, composed of six social service agencies working in harmony to provide the soldier with worthwhile leisure-time activities while he is away from the post. *The U.S.O.* always functions off the post.  
**Uncle Sam's Party**—army payday.  
**V**—five-dollar bill. Also called a *Fin*.  
**V-Day**—visitors' day in camp.  
**Walkie-talkie**—portable radio communications system carried on a man's back.  
**Yardbird**—any *Buck Private*.  
**Yellow-leg**—a cavalryman. Also called *Bow-legs*.  
 (Acknowledgment is made of the use of several of these terms from "The Soldier's Handbook," Basic Field Manual issued by the War Department.)



## INEXPENSIVE WORD COUNTER

By GILBERT RAE SONBERGH

Most professional writers put the word-count of a story or article in the upper right hand corner of page 1 of their manuscripts. A close approximation is all that's needed, but if a writer produces many different kinds of material and mixes it up with lots of dialogue it becomes a difficult task to estimate length with any degree of accuracy. Each manuscript presents an individual counting problem.

For an easy and inexpensive way around these difficulties buy, at your local sporting-goods store or from one of the large mail-order houses, an ordinary walker's pedometer, costing from \$1.50 up, and install it on the back of your typewriter on the mechanism which gives a jerk every time you strike a key.

Since the pedometer comes calibrated in miles, intended to register leg-movements in walking, a new relation has to be worked out, or a new calibration made to read directly in words typed. Type out one manuscript with the counter in place, then count the words of the one script, one by one. The figure obtained can then be related to the reading of the counter and will never vary, no matter what kind of material is typed.

# THE STUDENT WRITER

CONDUCTED BY WILLARD E. HAWKINS

## XXXVIII—LIMITATIONS OF THE BASIC THEMES

Our "post mortem" discussion of the Twelve Basic Themes has already brought out one thing very definitely: It makes no vital difference from the standpoint of theme what may be the motivating force back of a story. If our story involves sacrifice, the story will follow much the same pattern, "An individual renounces his own happiness for others," whether the sacrifice is performed for an individual—such as husband, wife, relative, friend, or pet—or for love of something abstract—such as home, country, an ideal, a principle, or a deity. Moreover, the same emotional drive may serve equally well as the motivating force for a story of Sacrifice, of Retribution, of Revenge, or any of the others on our list of themes.

Our reduction of stories to their common denominators requires the elimination of these motivating factors, along with all other details and personalities. Thus, a story outline, "John Jones, son of the blacksmith, murders Peter Smith, young man about town, because of jealousy over the latter's attentions to Vera Brown, the schoolteacher; he is tried for the crime and sentenced to the electric chair," becomes, when reduced to its least common denominator, "A character commits a wrong and is punished."

We are not even concerned with the degree of the wrong. A story about four-year-old Jackie, who touches a hot stove and is burned, reduces to the same statement as the preceding: "A character commits a wrong and is punished." Even though Jackie does not know, until taught by sad experience, that it is wrong to touch a stove, he exemplifies the theme of Retribution as clearly as John Jones, who committed his act with vengeful premeditation. A mistake is the mildest sort of a wrong, but it entails retribution just as surely as does an act of deepest depravity.

It may be seriously objected that, in this reduction of a narrative to its bare essentials—a cold, impersonal pattern—we are in danger of missing the point of the story.

The objection is valid. The basic themes have very definite limitations, and this is one of them. It has already been demonstrated by analysis of two dissimilar stories of patriotic intent that the basic theme takes no account of the real purpose back of a narrative. The purpose may be bound up in the basic theme, but it is just as likely to have little or no relation to it.

And while we are on the subject of limitations, it must be freely conceded that it is not always easy to determine the classification to which a given story may belong. There are, in every instance, clear-cut, unmistakable examples—stories that fit into the plot pattern like a glove. But there are also many borderline cases. Reverting, for example, to *The Red Badge of Courage*, which we have classified under the theme of Repentance, it would be quite logical to assert that the theme involved here is really *Regeneration*. The hero goes through an experience which refines and

makes a man of him; thus his "character is developed through adversity."

Uncertainties of this kind are frequent. At the same time, it can hardly be contended that they invalidate the system of classification. Naturalists often find it difficult to determine the species to which certain life forms belong; they are even undecided whether some lower forms of life belong to the plant or the animal kingdom. But this does not discredit the classifications, nor does it affect their clear application to more distinctly defined organisms.

In cases such as this, the distinction is likely to be a matter of emphasis upon one tendency or another. To readers of different temperament or background, the emphasis may appear different, especially when the distinctions are subtle.

More serious, from a practical standpoint, is the admitted fact that these classifications frequently ignore the real purpose—and in some instances, the real theme—of the narrative which may be involved.

We have, for example, classified Shaw's *Pygmalion* under the theme of Recognition. The story, shorn of motives and personalities and reduced to its lowest common denominator, becomes just that. A professor of phonetics selects an ignorant London flower girl and by three months' intensive grooming transforms her into a charming woman of the world, with whom he finally falls in love. Reduced still further, this becomes, "True worth eventually stands revealed"—the Recognition theme.

But this, obviously, was not the purpose Shaw had in mind when he wrote the drama. Actually, his story is a satire on the pretensions of society; it was written with intent to show that the assumed superiority of the privileged classes is merely a veneer.

In the same way, we lost the vital essence of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, which, in outline, reduces to the theme of Regeneration, "Character is developed through adversity." But the lesson which the author sought to convey dealt with the falsity of those artificial conventions which regarded a woman as a doll, to be shielded from reality and prevented from developing her faculties through contact with the world. The heroine blazed a trail toward the emancipation of women, which was becoming a vital issue during the period in which the play was written.

We might assert that the finer essence of each of these plays is the theme which constitutes its purpose. Whenever the "purpose-theme" differs from the basic theme obtained by reducing the bare outline of the story to its simple, impersonal form, it may almost inevitably be conceded that the purpose-theme is the more important of the two.

Our distillation loses this finer essence, just as the distillation of a delicate beverage, in many cases, loses the fine aroma and intangible elements which give it distinction.

The analogy which best illustrates the point here involved is that of wine-making. Wine is basically a compound of water, alcohol, and sugar. Without these basic ingredients, in the right proportions, we can have no wine. Nevertheless, if we mix alcohol, water, and sugar in the correct proportions, the result is not wine. Those things which make the wine and

account for its flavor and bouquet are elusive—often negligible—quantities of fruit acids, minerals, and volatile oils—ingredients so fine that they almost defy analysis, to say nothing of synthesis.

This effectively parallels the place of the basic themes in fiction. Every story must be built upon a formula of some kind which gives it body and substance. The basic formula is essential, just as water, alcohol, and sugar form a necessary foundation for wine. But without a finer purpose—perhaps so intangible as to defy expression—there will be no real story. The flavor and aroma of *Pygmalion* are not in the theme which serves as its foundation, but in this finer essence.

Viewing the subject from this angle, we will be quite prepared to find the basic themes playing an important part in the simpler, cruder, less sophisticated types of fiction, while they are relegated to a

secondary role in fiction designed for highly cultivated tastes.

The next lesson will attempt to prove the truth or falsity of this surmise by delving into some typical examples of each type of fiction.

### PRACTICE SUGGESTIONS

1. Take such a theme as Sacrifice, Retribution, Revenge, or any of the others we have classified as basic, and devise simple plots founded upon the selected theme, but motivated in each case by a different emotion or driving force—for example, by love, hate, fear, jealousy, ambition, suspicion, despair, hope.

2. Review the story examples given for each of the twelve basic themes in the series recently concluded, and—in all cases where you are familiar with the examples given—try to determine whether the purpose-theme is the same as the basic theme or different.

## SHOCK ABSORBERS—FOR THOSE REJECTION SLIPS

By VIOLET HAYS

WANT to know a secret? You can cushion those rejection slips so they don't hurt a bit! Or at least not much. Here is how I do it:

On my desk is a little loose-leaf notebook and in it I have pasted a collection of some exceptional bits that have made the road easier for me. Listen to this one.

"If that day come  
When I forget  
Laughter, and let  
A down-turned thumb  
Blacken the sky  
And mark song dead,  
Oh, turn your head  
When I pass by!"

—by Kathleen Sutton.

This next one's a honey.

"Apply the recognized aerotechnical tests to the bumblebee. Because of the shape and weight of his body in relation to total wing area, he cannot possibly fly. But the bumblebee doesn't know this. He goes ahead and flies anyway."

—Will Risdon

Feel a bit lazy?

"To him that talks, and talks, and talks,  
This motto should appeal:  
The steam that toots the whistle  
Has never turned a wheel."

—The Synchronizer

Worried?

"A little common sense, you'll find,  
Relieves a badly worried mind."

—Thornton W. Burgess

This one is downright cheery.

"Genius, the power that dazzles mortal's eyes,  
Is oft but perseverance in disguise;  
Continuous effort of itself implies,  
In spite of countless falls,  
The power to rise."

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox

For an especially black day—

"Minds need difficulty in schedules just as bodies need roughage in diet. You can't keep physically fit without exercise, fresh air, cold water, and

wholesome food. You can't keep mentally fit without conflict, criticism, danger, disappointment, failure, humiliation and constant, everlasting pressure."

—The Oregon Journal

A few pages list my sales. Of course, they are properly entered in my files. This is just the carrot I dangle to make the mare go. A peek at the next page and you'll know my heart's desire—a trip to Bermuda, an inside mailbox, and a code caller doorbell!

On the cover of my book of shock absorbers (you doubtless can find dozens more and choose the ones that most appeal to you—), is a ship with full sails spread against the sunset. The motto below—

"There is no use waiting for your ship to come in unless you have sent one out."

On the last page is this interesting paragraph from the literature of The Author and Journalist Simplified Training Course:

"If you write as a vocation—  
You work without a boss.  
You do congenial work in pleasant surroundings.  
You work when you feel like working.  
Your work means something to you; it is significant, worthy of you.  
You are free to travel without begging for a vacation.  
You become important to your friends and to yourself."

Now do you wish you'd taken up plumbing?

□ □ □ □

## NARRATIVE

By EDITH CLIFTON

A tale should gather, like the storm,  
its portents one by one,  
A lightning flash, a heavy crash  
of thunder, then, the sun.



# LITERARY MARKET TIPS

Ziff-Davis Publishing Co., 540 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, advises it is about to start a new aviation magazine, as yet unnamed, primarily for air-minded young men of from 14 to 21 years of age. The magazine will contain a large variety of material of interest to the air-minded youth, such as model building, a letters column, question and answer department, puzzles, games, aviation quizzes and articles on "how to be," "how to do" and "how to make." Non-fiction only will be used. Emphasis will be on good photographs and interesting material that will appeal to the youthful reader group. Writers are urged to contact Max Karant, managing editor, via air mail, with any ideas or finished manuscripts they think suitable. Payment will be on publication for the first three issues only; subsequent issues will be paid for on acceptance. Rates will start at 1 cent a word.

*The Writers' Forum*, a project of the Antioch Press, Yellow Springs, Ohio, is now an open market for stories, poems, sketches, one-act plays, essays, controversial or factual articles—in fact, about the only taboo is against the pseudo-realism and the synthetic plot of the commercial formula story. Prose runs between 1000 and 4000 words, occasionally to 6000; poetry up to full page size. Non-subscriber material accepted for publication is paid for in subscription credit. Paul H. Rohmann is associate editor.

*Sonnet Sequences*, Box 1231, Washington, D. C., is temporarily discontinuing payment. Murray and Hazel Marshall, editors, hope to be able to resume payment and will do so as soon as possible.

*Star Dust*, poetry section of the *Seattle Daily Star*, uses a poem a day, not over 12 lines. No payment is made but a copy of the published poem is forwarded to contributor. Address Sprague O. Smith, 8045 20th Ave., N. W., Seattle.

*Photographic Trade News*, 381 4th Ave., New York, wants interviews with dealers to find out what they are doing to overcome the shortage situation and how they are merchandising under current wartime conditions. Stories should be kept short. Howard Shonting, editor, is endeavoring to use up all feature-length stories in the February and March issues, so advises against sending any long stories at present.

*Cleaning and Laundry World*, 381 4th Ave., New York, is seeking interviews with heads of plants covering efficiency of operation, ideas on route sales, or any angle keyed to the current war and defense problems. Stories should be short and to the point. Editor is Howard Shonting.

*Rodeo Romances*, 10 E. 40th St., New York, is a new Standard-Thrilling love story magazine, wide open for stories written from the girl viewpoint largely, but not necessarily. A rodeo setting is not required but there should be some rodeo connection. Short stories should not exceed 6000 words; novellettes should average between 8000 and 10,000. Payment is on publication at 1/2 cent a word. Leo Margulies is editorial director.

*Beauty & Health*, 122 E. 42nd St., New York, the 1942 version of *Physical Culture*, needs informative articles on health and nutrition aimed at women seekers of health and beauty. Short articles may run to between 3000 and 4000 words; features, to 15,000. Bonus prices are promised for especially good material; good prices for all, on acceptance. Ann Gurley is managing editor.

Alfred D. Moore, editor in charge, *Classmate*, 810 Broadway, Nashville, Tenn., announces a change in policy in regard to sample copies. Hereafter, no sample copies will be sent to persons requesting them with a view to writing for them, unless the request is made for specific magazines and return postage is included. This applies to all of the story-papers published by this religious house.

*338 News*, 152 W. 42nd St., New York, is in the market for articles on current events, domestic and foreign, biographical sketches, articles on theatre, movie and sports personalities. Payment is made on publication at 1 cent a word. Illustrations and cartoons are used, also. \$5.00 up is paid for drawings. E. Schwartzman is editor.

Popular Publications, 205 E. 42nd St., New York, reports no drastic editorial changes because of the war. "If anything," states Rogers Terrill, associate publisher, commenting on Westerns, "I expect we shall be looking for a little more emphasis on early pioneer stuff and on the sort of high adventure and

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robust man-conflict which may make a little more glamorous to war-torn minds our kind of escape fiction. There will be a little less on psychological and social problems, and in general a slightly more adventurous and never-never story type."

Fictioneers, Inc., 210 E. 43rd St., New York, Alden H. Norton, editor, is in acute need of crime fiction and fact material of all lengths.

*Detective Fiction* (Munsey), 280 Broadway, New York, Paul A. Johnson, editor, wrote a contributor recently: "I am not buying and will not be buying for an indefinite time, any stories of 7000 and up."

*Railroad Magazine*, 280 Broadway, New York, should not be considered a fiction magazine. Writes Freeman H. Hubbard, editor, "We are no longer in the market for fiction, poetry or fillers. *Railroad* is a factual magazine, using very little fiction, and always overstocked with fiction Mss. We pay good rates for railroad fact articles written on assignment from the railroadman's viewpoint (not from the general public's viewpoint). Good writers thoroughly familiar with one or more phases of railroading are invited to contact us. Those who qualify are given immediate assignments."

*Fair Winds*, 27 Coenties Slip, New York, "the only magazine in America devoted exclusively to ships of sail," has been temporarily discontinued. W. M. Williamson, editor, hopes, however, to get under sail before long.

*Swank*, 247 Park Avenue, New York, is, according to Abner J. Sundell, editor, "a fast-paying, fast-reporting market, and is a good bet for new young writers who show promise." Important thing is that material, whether supplied by new, young writers, or old, established ones, be good. Rates are in no way limited by any factors. Articles of a controversial nature, around which a publicity campaign can be opened, are of particular interest. (Note such articles in recent issues as "Fatherhood for Sale," by David Robinson George. "In Defense of the Illegitimate," by J. H. Pollack.) "We are also in the market for smart, sophisticated satire, or short stories of a definite literary quality along the lines of "Brother Joe," by Ira Wolfert (October), and "If This Be Glory," by Ashley Buck (January)." Mr. Sundell believes that writers generally would "be pretty smart if they studied an issue or two and then started slanting things definitely for us."

Wide World Photos, Inc., formerly at 229 W. 43d St., New York, is now located at 50 Rockefeller Plaza.

*Classmate*, (Methodist Pub. house) 810 Broadway, Nashville, Tenn., reports that material (short stories) should fit the following seasons: (1) calendar; (2) church year, and (3) patriotic. Payment is made on acceptance at 1 cent a word. All material should be received five months ahead of season covered.

*Fiction Monthly*, 3453 Peel St., Ste. 6, Montreal, Can., is a new magazine announced for immediate publication. Writes Milton Kanter, editor, "Our magazine will carry more short shorts than any other on the stands—therefore there is a big need for such type of story. There are no taboos—adventure, love, detective, etc., all will be used. We will need about 15 stories a month, running from 800 to 2000 words; also fillers, and an occasional poem. What we want primarily is new authors—we believe there must be writers who really have a good story if they can get a sympathetic audience." First few issues will be distributed only in Canada. Rates will be low at first— $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cent a word. However, Mr. Kanter promises that any scripts returned will be notated with reasons for their rejection, as a help to budding writers. Canadian postage or its equivalent should be enclosed.

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*Ideal Love*, 60 Hudson St., New York, a bi-monthly, gives its specific requirements as articles, around 1000 words, short stories, 3000 to 6000 words, novelettes, 6000 to 9000 words, and verse of various lengths. Chief need is good romantic love stories. Lois Allen, editor, promises 1/2 cent a word on publication.

Sound Control, Transcription and Production Company, 412 9th St., Des Moines, Iowa, writes the A. & J. that it is in the market for scripts and show ideas for a proposed new serial program which its salesmen will offer to individual radio stations in March. Writers are asked to send sample 11-minute scripts instead of simply ideas, and to protect their manuscripts before mailing. As there are no standard writers' rates, writers are asked to specify their own rates per script and per series of 150 scripts. Address Edward Truman, production manager. (Be sure to enclose return postage.)

*The Dream Shop*, 1132 Franklin Ave., Columbus, Ohio, sponsored by the Verse Writers Guild of Ohio, is a quarterly containing news of interest to poets, reprints, and book reviews. Faye Chilcote Walker, editor, prefers brief rhymed poems of a very high standard. Out-of-state subscribers are welcome. Payment, at present, is in prizes only. Guild membership is \$1.00 a year to all who qualify. Three published poems should accompany each application for membership.

The Greystone Press, 40 E. 49th St., New York, informs that editor is George Shively, not George Shively Hendricks, as printed in our November book list.

*American Wine & Liquor Journal*, 220 E. 42nd St., New York, has purchased *Mida's Criterion* from the Gillette Publishing Co., 155 E. 44th St., New York. Lew Schwartz, editor, announces there will be no

change in editorial requirements for the merged publications at present.

*Printers' Ink* and *Printers' Ink Monthly*, 185 Madison Ave., New York, have been merged into one publication, to be known as *Printers' Ink*. Many of the features of the two magazines will be continued in the new magazine, which will be 8 1/2 x 11 1/2 inches in size as compared with the 5 1/4 x 8 1/4 inches trim size of the former *Printers' Ink*.

*Mass Transportation*, 431 S. Dearborn, Chicago, reports that at the present time it is not in the market for any contributed material.

*Current History*, Scotch Plains, N. J., which incorporates *Events*, *Forum*, and *Century*, still continues to receive poetry, stories, essays, and other material of a type not purchased. "*Current History*," writes Spencer Brodney, editor, "is concerned with world affairs from an authoritative standpoint. Most of these articles are written by professional historians, political scientists, and other specialists. Ordinary free lance material has very little chance of acceptance unless the writer is as well qualified as these experts. In regard to style, we abominate the debased English that so many newspaper and magazine writers now think it smart to use. We want good, readable prose, which, unfortunately, just as many scholarly people also do not know how to write . . . The writing that

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interests us most is that which comes as part of the writer's real interests in what is going on in the world. That means that material manufactured merely to supply so-called market needs is not what we want."

*The National Provisioner*, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, announces that, in the future, checks for less than \$2.50 will not be issued unless after a three months' period credits do not reach that amount. When necessary, however, exception will be made upon special request.

*Automobile & Trailer Travel*, 35 E. Wacker Drive, Chicago, submits this advice to prospective contributors. Writes Karl Hale Dixon, editor: "We editors of smaller periodicals don't want to be surfeited with stuff submitted by people who do not happen to know anything about our respective fields. I don't think that anyone could write anything for our magazine convincingly and 'acceptingly' who knows nothing about a trailer coach and hasn't done some trailer traveling."

*Swank*, 247 Park Ave., New York, will pay \$5 for every letter, pro and con, it prints on "My Ideas About Kissing." These letters will follow an expose, "Kissing Must Stop," which will appear in the February issue of *Swank*. Letters may be written in a serious or humorous vein, but should not exceed 300 words. Entries must be mailed to the editor not later than January 24, 1942.

*Kansas City Poetry Magazine*, Waldheim Bldg., Kansas City, Mo., requires all contributors to be subscribers, according to an A. & J. reader, who recently had a poem "accepted" on a subscription blank, with the statement, "We'll print one poem. Contributors must be subscribers—\$1.00 a year."

*The Evening Public Ledger*, Philadelphia, has been ordered by the federal district court to suspend publication as no satisfactory plan of financial reorganization has been presented by its trustees. The Ledger Syndicate at the same time was allowed to continue operation 30 days while a buyer was sought.

*Stocking Parade*, (Arrow Publications) 125 E. 46th St., New York, a bi-monthly, is in the market for fast-moving shorts, in a light love vein, running between 1800 and 2200 words. Payment is on acceptance at 1 cent a word. Gloria Grey, editor, suggests that contributors consult the last two issues for policy, which differs radically from the earlier approach of the magazine. Strong girl interest is now sought.

□ □ □ □

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## The Old Editor

### VILLAINS IN FICTION—AND LIFE

Seven years ago, the guest speaker at a dinner of the American Fiction Guild, an organization of pulp writers, was a famous adventurer and soldier of fortune.

He was a clever, appealing commentator. A real-life professional in fields of action about which many of his listeners wrote fiction, he criticized pulp magazines and pulp writers. He said, "Pulp stories are well done in their way; I concede that . . . they amuse readers. But, after all, they really are just fairy stories. For example, they are much too virtuous. The hero always wins. The villain never gets a break.

"Now, all that isn't true to life. In our human world, it is the man with brains who always wins—whether he is noble or not."

Then, this speaker, talking with great frankness, declared that, personally, he did not play a hero's part unless it paid him more to do so. He revealed that, as a free-lance intelligence agent, he had double-crossed many a hero (according to pulp standards) for the joy of adventure combined with profit.

That speech caused the pulp writers at the meeting to lose some of their faith as writers. Perhaps, after all, the worldly-wise adventurer was sound in his assertions that the values which pulp writers respect, and preach, are purely fictional; that a pulp writer can never become a great author, if he believes what he writes in his pulp stories.

Was the soldier of fortune right, and conscientious pulp writers wrong? Does a pulp writer have to write with his tongue in his cheek? You can draw your own conclusions from the sequel.

That speaker of seven years ago was Frederick Joubert Duquesne. On January 2, 1942, in New York City, a Federal judge sentenced Duquesne to 18 years' imprisonment for espionage.

fore March 15, 1942. The competition is open to authors born in the South, even though now living elsewhere, and to those having at least five years residence in the South, though born elsewhere. Both fiction and non-fiction, preferably not less than 50,000 words in length, are eligible. All manuscripts submitted will be considered for possible publication, subject to contractual terms to be proposed by the company.

The Poetry Society of America has established the Lola Ridge Memorial Prize of \$100, contest for which is now on. Poems should preferably be under 100 lines. They may be on any subject, though interpreting the forces of our day. Rules require that each poem be submitted anonymously, with a sealed envelope containing the name of the poem and the poet. Address Lola Ridge Memorial Prize Contest, c/o Harold Vinal, 33 W. 51st St., New York.

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The Julia Ellsworth Ford Foundation announces its ninth competition for the best juvenile manuscript submitted before March 31, 1942. Award will be \$2000. All entries should be sent to the Foundation at 8 W. 40th St., New York.

## Q. and A. Department

For personal reply, accompany your inquiry with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. This department does not criticize manuscripts. Questions and replies below have been condensed.

I want to know right away what this taboo is against matter derogatory to doctors. By what right are they immune to criticism? It's time that rule was abolished. We need new light shed on the medical profession—true confessions, magazine and newspaper articles, galore. I am going to town with this. You should do likewise. Ask editors to raise that ban of censorship.

F. B.

Santa Monica, Calif.

► We assume our correspondent has arrived at the conclusion, from personal observation, that doctors are frail and human; that some of them take advantage of credulous men and women suffering from real or imagined disease; that out-and-out quacks still operate.

In the doctor as an institution, society insists on the prerogative of faith and confidence, vastly important in the effective treatment of most ailments. Magazines and newspapers have often exposed quackery; and have covered abortion rings, brought to punishment, with lengthy articles. In fiction, the broken-down doctor is a standard character—Gene Lockhart played the role magnificently in the motion picture dramatization of Jack London's "The Sea Wolf."

Publications, rightly, are not interested in attacking doctors as a class—any more than they would be in "exposing" ministers as a class. People do not wish to have their respect for doctors and ministers undermined. In the main, both professions conform to high ethical standards, and consistently strive to improve the social service they perform.

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(Personals)

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